Scotland: Highlands and the West on the Royal Scotsman

https://www.irtsociety.com/journey/grand-western-scenic-wonders/



Overview

The Highlights

- Seven nights aboard one of the world’s top luxury trains

- Private tour of Ballindalloch, with its magnificent house and gardens

- Special activities such as fishing, clay pigeon shooting, or a guided walk along Caledonian pine forest trails

- Private visit of Mount Stuart, one of Britain’s most spectacular Victorian Gothic houses

- Explore Glamis Castle, childhood home of the Queen Mother

- Before-dinner drinks in the cozy lounge car; fabulous five-star dining and service in the two dining cars

- Wind-in-your-face viewing from the open-air observation platform

The Tour

With seven nights aboard, this is one of our favorite trips: Enjoy the *Belmond Royal Scotsman* and Scotland to their fullest. The Scotland: Highlands and the West tour combines the 5-day Highlands and Scotland: The West Coast itineraries for a comprehensive exploration of Scotland.

Enjoy the many highlights along the way, including a personal invitation to visit Ballindalloch, with its magnificent house and gardens. Relax and experience the magnificent West Highland scenery and a private view of Mount Stuart, one of Britain's most spectacular Victorian Gothic houses.

Itinerary

Day 1: Edinburgh – Keith (Northbound)

The train departs from Edinburgh in the early afternoon and heads north, crossing the Firth of Forth by means of the Forth Railway Bridge.

Enjoy afternoon tea as you travel through the former Kingdom of Fife to the east coast, passing through Arbroath, Montrose, and Aberdeen, before arriving in Keith. An informal dinner on board is followed by entertainment in the observation car.

Day 2: Keith – Kyle of Lochalsh (Northbound)

Your journey continues west this morning along the Moray Firth towards Inverness, the capital of the Highlands. Lunch is served on the way to Kyle of Lochalsh, one of the most scenic routes in Britain. From there, the train passes Loch Luichart, the Torridon Mountains, and Achnasheen before it begins the climb to Luib summit and Achnashellach Forest and descends into Strathcarron. The train then follows the edge of Loch Carron through Attadale, Stromeferry, and Duncraig.

The train stops in fishing village of Plockton, where you'll take a boat trip to see a colony of wild seals and enjoying the beautiful views across the bay to the Applecross Mountains. After the trip,

take a woodland walk and enjoy a traditional Highland welcome and a dram or two in the Plockton Hotel on the seafront.

Return to the train in Kyle of Lochalsh for a formal dinner, coffee and liqueurs in the observation car, and overnight stabling.

Day 3: Kyle of Lochalsh – Boat of Garten (Northbound)

Join your onboard host for an invigorating early-morning walk over the bridge that links the mainland with the Isle of Skye. Depart from Kyle of Lochalsh as breakfast is served, retracing part of yesterday's route. Travel around the edge of the Beauly Firth, across the northern end of the Caledonian Canal before reaching Inverness.

Disembark in Garve for a bespoke shopping experience. Alternatively, stretch your legs and join our Highland storyteller for a walk along the old military road leading to Silver Bridge. Lunch is served as the train departs Inverness en route to Carrbridge.

Visit Ballindalloch, one of Scotland's most romantic castles. Take a tour of the building and grounds, or visit the castle’s single estate whisky distillery.

Return to the train at Boat of Garten and prepare for an informal dinner. Afterwards, make your way to the Observation Car, where local musicians are waiting to entertain you as you sip a nightcap or two.

Day 4: Boat of Garten – Dundee (Northbound)

After breakfast, travel the short distance by coach to Rothiemurchus Estate in the heart of the Cairngorms National Park. Choose from a number of activities, including fishing, clay pigeon-shooting, and an estate tour. Afterward, receive a warm welcome from your hosts as refreshments are served in their hunting lodge and you learn about the fascinating history of the estate, which has been in the family for over 400 years.

Return to the train in Kingussie and enjoy a leisurely lunch as you travel south through Blair Atholl and Pitlochry to Dunkeld, where you disembark for a private tour of Glamis Castle and its beautiful gardens. Glamis was the childhood home of Queen Elizabeth.

After the tour, rejoin the train in Perth and prepare for a formal dinner en route to Dundee. Let the after-dinner musicians inspire you to partake in some lively Scottish country dancing.

Day 5: Dundee – Edinburgh – Spean Bridge (Northbound)

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast as the train departs Dundee and crosses the Tay Bridge into the former Kingdom of Fife and on to Edinburgh.

Disembark in Edinburgh where you will be escorted for a guided city tour followed by a light lunch on-board. Alternatively, enjoy some free time to explore Scotland’s vibrant capital city on your own.

Re-join the train in the early afternoon and travel west to Falkirk, Clydebank, and Dumbarton to skirt Glasgow before reaching the northern bank of the Clyde and Craigendoran, the starting point of the majestic West Highland Line. Enjoy afternoon tea as the train passes Gare Loch and Loch Lomond, with views of waterfalls, moors and mountains.

An informal dinner is served on the way to Spean Bridge, followed by lively entertainment by local musicians in the observation car.

Day 6: Spean Bridge – Bridge of Orchy (Northbound)

As the train travels west, watch for views of Ben Nevis, the tallest peak in the UK. Disembark at Arisaig for an evocative walk along the beautiful Morar Sands, with breathtaking views across the Sound of Sleat to the Isle of Skye with its distinctive Cuillin Mountains.

Back on board, lunch is served as the train retraces its route to Fort William. Disembark here and enjoy a visit to historic Glenfinnan. Enjoy drinks and some light bites in the traditional cozy bar of The Old Station Restaurant, located at Spean Bridge Railway Station, before returning to Fort William.

Alternatively, a guided, moderate-grade hike is available (weather permitting) through the scenic Nevis Gorge to the Steall Waterfall, the second highest in the UK.

Return to the train in Fort William and relax on-board before an informal dinner is served as you travel south towards Bridge of Orchy.

Day 7: Bridge of Orchy – Kilmarnock (Northbound)

Leaving the Bridge of Orchy this morning, savor the dramatic highland scenery as you journey south towards Glasgow and the west coast. Board the ferry in Wemyss Bay for a 35-minute crossing to the Isle of Bute. The island embraces a variety of landscapes: seashore, moorland, farmland, and forest.

Visit Mount Stuart, Britain’s most spectacular Victorian Gothic house and the fantasy of the 3rd Marquess of Bute and his architect, Sir Robert Rowand Anderson. After enjoying afternoon tea in the Drawing Room, you are invited to explore the magnificent house and grounds, which include a rock garden, kitchen garden, display of rare plants, and a Victorian pinetum.

Return to the train, where a delicious formal dinner is served. Relax in the observation car over coffee, liqueurs, and traditional Scottish music.

Day 8: Kilmarnock – Edinburgh (Northbound)

Breakfast is served as the train travels east to Edinburgh where your journey ends at Waverley Station.

Reverse itinerary

Day 1: Edinburgh – Spean Bridge (Westbound)

The train departs in the early afternoon and travel west to Falkirk, Clydebank, and Dumbarton to skirt Glasgow before reaching the northern bank of the Clyde and Craigendoran, the starting point of the majestic West Highland Line. Enjoy afternoon tea as the train passes Gare Loch and Loch Lomond, with views of waterfalls, moors and mountains. An informal dinner is served on the way to Spean Bridge, followed by lively entertainment by local musicians in the observation car.

Day 2: Spean Bridge – Bridge of Orchy (Westbound)

As the train travels west, passing through Fort William, enjoy the views of Ben Nevis, the tallest peak in the UK. You will then pass Glenfinnan, with its impressive curved viaduct, and Lochailort, before turning north along this dramatic coastline to Arisaig. Lunch is served as the train retraces its route to Fort William.

Disembark in Glenfinnan, where our local guide brings to life the stories of Scottish heroes before your group enjoys drinks and some light bites in the traditional cozy bar of The Old Station Restaurant, located at Spean Bridge Railway Station. Alternatively, a guided, moderate-grade hike is available (weather permitting) through the scenic Nevis Gorge to the Steall Waterfall, the second highest in the UK. This two-hour walk requires a reasonable level of fitness, as well as sturdy walking boots with a good tread and ankle support, a waterproof jacket, and suitable trousers.

Return to the train in Fort William and relax on-board before an informal dinner is served as you travel south towards Bridge of Orchy. Afterwards, enjoy a nightcap whilst listening to the evening entertainment.

Day 3: Bridge of Orchy – Isle of Bute – Kilmarnock (Westbound)

Leaving the Bridge of Orchy this morning, enjoy the dramatic highland scenery as you journey south towards Glasgow and the west coast. Board the ferry in Wemyss Bay for a 35-minute crossing to the Isle of Bute. The island embraces a variety of landscapes: seashore, moorland, farmland, and forest.

Visit Mount Stuart, Britain’s most spectacular Victorian Gothic house and the fantasy of the 3rd Marquess of Bute and his architect, Sir Robert Rowand Anderson. After enjoying afternoon tea in the Drawing Room, you are invited to explore the magnificent house and grounds, which include a rock garden, kitchen garden, display of rare plants, and a Victorian pinetum.

Return to the train in Wemyss Bay, where a delicious formal dinner is served on the way to Kilmarnock, the overnight stabling location for this evening. Relax in the observation car over coffee, liqueurs, and traditional Scottish music.

Day 4: Kilmarnock – Edinburgh – Keith (Westbound)

Breakfast is served as the train leaves Gourock and travels east to Edinburgh, where the first part

of your journey ends at Waverley Station.

Disembark in Edinburgh where you will be escorted on a guided tour of the city, along with a light lunch off the train. Alternatively, enjoy some free time to explore Scotland's vibrant capital city.

Re-join the train in the early afternoon and head north, crossing the Firth of Forth by means of the Forth Railway Bridge. Enjoy afternoon tea as you travel through the former Kingdom of Fife to the east coast, passing through Arbroath, Montrose, and Aberdeen, before arriving in Keith. Enjoy an informal dinner on-board, followed by entertainment in the observation car.

Day 5: Keith – Kyle of Lochalsh (Westbound)

Your journey continues west this morning along the Moray Firth towards Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, and lunch is served on the way to Kyle of Lochalsh - one of the most scenic rail lines in the UK.

The train stops in the beautiful fishing village of Plockton, where you have the option of taking a boat trip to see a colony of wild seals and enjoying the beautiful views across the bay to the Applecross Mountains. After the trip, take a woodland walk and enjoy a traditional Highland welcome and a dram or two in the Plockton Hotel on the seafront.

Return to the train in Kyle of Lochalsh for a formal dinner, coffee and liqueurs in the observation car, and overnight stabling.

Day 6: Kyle of Lochalsh – Boat of Garten (Westbound)

If you're feeling energetic, join your onboard Host for an invigorating early-morning walk over the bridge that links the mainland with the Isle Of Skye. After breakfast the train heads back towards Dingwall, skirting the Beauly Firth and crossing the top of the Caledonian Canal, north of Loch Ness, before reaching Inverness.

The train continues south to Carrbridge where you will disembark to visit the romantic Ballindalloch Castle and its wonderful gardens.

Return to the train at Boat of Garten for an informal dinner, followed by entertainment in the observation car.

Day 7: Boat of Garten – Dundee (Westbound)

After breakfast, travel the short distance by coach to Rothiemurchus Estate in the heart of the Cairngorms National Park. Choose from a number of activities, including fishing, clay pigeon-shooting, and an estate tour. Afterward, receive a warm welcome from your hosts as refreshments are served in their hunting lodge and you learn about the fascinating history of the estate, which has been in the family for over 400 years.

Return to the train in Kingussie and enjoy a leisurely lunch as you travel south through Blair Atholl and Pitlochry to Dunkeld, where you disembark for a private tour of Glamis Castle and its

beautiful gardens. Glamis was the childhood home of Queen Elizabeth.

After the tour, rejoin the train in Perth and prepare for a your final formal dinner on board. Let the after-dinner musicians inspire you to partake in some lively Scottish country dancing.

Day 8: Dundee – Edinburgh (Westbound)

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast as the train departs Dundee and crosses the Tay Bridge into the former Kingdom of Fife and on to Edinburgh. Disembark in Edinburgh, where your journey ends.

Dates & Prices

2027 Dates

April 5 - April 12
April 9 - April 16
April 12 - April 19
April 16 - April 23
June 4 - June 11
June 28 - July 5
July 23 - July 30
August 9 - August 16
August 13 - August 20
August 16 - August 23
September 20 - September 27
September 24 - October 1

Accommodation	Double	Single	Deposit
Twin/Double	From £20,550	From £41,000	25%
Grand Suite	From £48,700	From £97,400	25%

Prices are in British pounds. View approximate exchange rates.
Prices are per person.
Pricing varies based on availability and date. Prices are subject to change daily. Contact us to confirm pricing and availability for your desired departure.

More

Prices are per person and include all table d'hôte meals, all alcoholic and other beverages, all sightseeing excursions as shown in the itinerary and accommodation on board based on two

people sharing a twin compartment or one person in a single.